



23 January 2017

## Join in the 10 year anniversary celebrations for the National Cold War Exhibition

**Date:** 7 February 2017

**Time:** 10am - 4pm

**Cost:** FREE

**On Tuesday 7 February 2017 the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford will be marking the 10th anniversary of the award-winning National Cold War Exhibition with a special event for aviation fans.**

The £12.5 million landmark building and exhibition was officially opened in 2007 by HRH The Princess Royal and invited VIP guests included the Rt Hon Baroness Thatcher. Its eye-catching architecture and dynamic aircraft displays truly have the 'wow' factor and in addition to the unique aircraft collection, visitors can also view iconic cars, tanks, memorabilia and even life-sized Russian dolls. Immersive Hotspots covering topics including the Space Race and the Cuban Missile Crisis are a hub of information, engaging visitors with a Cold War history spanning over four decades. Cosford is also the only place in the world where you can see all three of Britain's V-Bombers; the Vulcan, Victor and Valiant displayed together under one roof.

To celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, visitors are invited to join Museum staff and volunteers for a special event that will see a number of Cold War aircraft opened for exclusive close up access, including the Vickers Valiant B1 and the Handley Page Victor K2. Both aircraft are being opened to the public for the very first time and the Cosford team hope aviation fans will seize the opportunity to step on board two of Britain's nuclear strike force aircraft, which played a vital role during the critical Cold War years.

The Valiant was the first of Bomber Command's V class aircraft and established Britain's air-borne nuclear deterrent force before pioneering operational in-flight refuelling in the Royal Air Force. Not only was it the first V-Bomber to enter service, it was also the first to drop an operational British nuclear weapon over Christmas Island in 1957. The Victor was designed and in service as a strategic nuclear bomber, some were converted to in-flight refuelling tankers and remained in service until 1993. Victors were heavily utilised in the 1982 Falklands campaign and the 1991 Gulf War before retiring from service in 1993. Both aircraft now reside at the RAF Museum Cosford, displayed alongside the Hawker Siddeley Vulcan B2 and dominate the upper level of the National Cold War Exhibition.

In addition to the Victor and Valiant, other Cold War aircraft and vehicles being opened to the public for the anniversary event will include the General Dynamics F-111F-CF, Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG 21PF, Hawker Hunter F.4 (nose section), Avro York C1, McDonnell Douglas Phantom FG.1 (nose section) and the Short Brothers Belfast. Aviation fans will also be able to take a look inside the Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-15bis, the BMP-1 infantry fighting vehicle, Green Goddess auxiliary fire engine and the Tracked Rapier missile launcher.

**RAF Museum Assistant Director, Paul Pomfret said:**

*“The National Cold War Exhibition transformed the Cosford site with its award winning architecture and catapulted the Museum onto a global stage, doubling the number of visitors who pass through its doors each year. Since its opening in 2007, over 3.2 million visitors have passed through its doors and interest in the exhibition and the Museum has remained consistent ever since. We look forward to welcoming visitors to the Museum next month, to share in the celebrations for this milestone.”*

As part of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations the Museum’s shop will be offering 10% off gifts and souvenirs and for anyone who wishes to enjoy a hot lunch in the Refuel Restaurant, the Museum’s caterers Kudos will be offering 10% off their lunchtime menu.

This rare opportunity to see inside these aircraft is FREE of charge for visitors. Any donations made by visitors on the day will support the work of the RAF Museum (registered charity number 244708).

The Museum is open from 10am until 4pm and the event will run for the entire day giving visitors up to eight hours to climb on board and peek inside some of the Museum’s iconic Cold War aircraft. Aircraft available on the day are subject to change. Full details can be found on the Museum website [www.rafmuseum.org/cosford](http://www.rafmuseum.org/cosford) including information on aircraft accessibility.

Ends...

**Notes to Editors:**

**National Cold War Exhibition – The Facts**

Length:	138 metres
Height:	30 metres
Width:	57 metres at its widest / 43 metres at its narrowest
Structural Frame Weight:	Constructed with some 1,000 tonnes of steel
Volume:	8,000m2 (including the theatre and classrooms)

Work began on construction of the building in December 2004 and was completed in April 2006. Aircraft movements and the exhibition fit out took place until December 2006.

The building design takes the format of two triangles acting as opposites of each other symbolic of the different ideologies between East and West. The triangles are separated by steel platforms and vertical steel supports – the iron curtain.

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- Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Open daily from 10am

- Admission to the Royal Air Force Museum is free of charge.
- RAF Museum Cosford images & logo available at:  
<http://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/research/media-vault.aspx>
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Michelle Morgans on 01902 376212 or email [michelle.morgans@rafmuseum.org](mailto:michelle.morgans@rafmuseum.org)
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